

Message Text

SECRET

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ORIGIN SS-05

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 /006 R

DRAFTED BY S/S:DANDERSON/FWISNER:BABS

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TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

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KOOLAI, FOR TARNOFF FROM ANDERSON/WISNER

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: BITS AND PIECES

1. BRZEZINSKI HAS CALLED FOR A PRC MEETING ON THE SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR ISSUE ON THURSDAY MORNING. HE ALSO WANTS TO TAKE UP THE HORN OF AFRICA IN THE SAME MEETING.
2. AT A MEETING YESTERDAY WITH THE BROOKS SUBCOMMITTEE STAFFERS, BOB SAYRE DESCRIBED THE ANNUAL POLICY ASSESSMENT PROCESS, INCLUDING THE PART THAT FOCUSES ON POSTS' RESOURCES. NATURALLY, THE STAFFERS DECIDED THEY WANTED THE ASSESSMENTS WITH THE RESOURCE ADDENDA. THIS POSES SOME SERIOUS PROBLEMS FOR US, OBVIOUSLY, AND BEN READ IS PRESENTLY CONSIDERING HOW TO DEAL WITH THE REQUEST. ONE IDEA UNDER CONSIDERATION IS TO ALLOW ONE OF THE STAFFERS TO READ THE DOCUMENTS AND TAKE NOTES ON THEM BUT NOT TO BE ALLOWED COPIES. WE WILL LET YOU KNOW FURTHER WHAT IS HAPPENING ON THIS MATTER.

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3. BEN READ REPORTS TO US THAT THE NUMBER OF FLOOR-WALKERS IS DOWN TO ABOUT TEN. THE ATTRITION HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED BY ASSIGNMENTS TO OTHER AGENCIES, UNIVERSITIES AND OVER-COMPLEMENT TEMPORARY POSITIONS. THIS MAKES THINGS LOOK BETTER FOR THE TIME BEING. WE'LL SEE WHAT NEXT WEEK BRINGS.
4. THE U.S. PRESS COMMENTARIES ON MR. VANCE AND HIS

PEREGRINATIONS HAVE BEEN FAIRLY CRITICAL IN RECENT DAYS. THEY MAY CHANGE IF THE PRESENT TRIP BEGINS TO SHOW EVEN SOME POSITIVE ATMOSPHERICAL RESULTS. YOU MAY WISH TO BEGIN PRIVATE MUSING (WITH HODDING AND PHIL?) TO COME UP WITH THOUGHTS WHICH WE COULD DISCUSS AFTER YOUR RETURN. WITHOUT OVERSTATING THE PROBLEM, WE DO HAVE TO COUNTER SOME OF THE UNFAIR CRITICISMS BEING LEVIED AT MR. VANCE.

5. PART OF THE ANSWER WILL BE AN EDUCATIONAL PROCESS FOR THE MEDIA PEOPLE. THEY HAVE TO BE TOLD THAT MR. VANCE IS NOT GOING TO CLAIM VICTORIES WHERE NONE EXIST, THAT AGREEMENTS AND BREAKTHROUGHTS WILL NOT EMERGE FROM EVERY TRIP HE MAKES, AND THAT HIS (AND THE PRESIDENT'S) APPROACH TO FOREIGN AFFAIRS ISSUES IS MORE MEASURED AND METHODICAL AND LESS SUSCEPTIBLE OF MISTAKES AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS THAN IN TIMES PAST. THIS IS NOT A CATCHY WAY TO PRESENT MR. VANCE'S DIPLOMATIC MANNER OR HIS APPROACH TO THE SOLUTION OF FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES, BUT IT IS AN HONEST ONE, AND IT MAY WELL MAKE A VIRTUE -- INDEED WE SHOULD TRY TO MAKE IT A VIRTUE -- OUT OF CONTRASTING HIS NO-NONSENSE, DOWN-TO-EARTH APPROACH WITH WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE.

6. PART OF THE ANSWER WILL LIE IN HAVING THE PRESIDENT, THE WHITE HOUSE AND THE NSC AVOID TAKING PUBLIC POSITIONS ON FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES THAT PUT MR. VANCE IN THE POSITION OF HAVING TO LIVE UP TO UNFULFILLABLE EXPECTATIONS.

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THIS WILL CALL FOR SOME FRANK TALKING BETWEEN ALL PARTIES.

7. FINALLY, PART OF THE ANSWER LIES WITH MR. VANCE HIMSELF. HE MAY HAVE TO SEE THE PRESS IN LARGER NUMBERS (IN GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALLY) THAN HE WISHES OR THINKS HE HAS TIME FOR. HE MIGHT ALSO CONSIDER SPENDING MORE TIME EXPLAINING THE FRAMEWORK AND CONTEXT OF THE NEGOTIATIONS WHICH HE UNDERTAKES TO THE PRESS, PARTICULARLY THOSE WHO ACCOMPANY HIM -- A THOUGHT YOU MIGHT KEEP IN MIND AS YOU WRAP UP THE CHINA TRIP.

8. THE PROBLEM WE FACE IS NOT JUST A PR PROBLEM. MR. VANCE'S CREDIBILITY AND EVEN HIS STANDING IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY WILL BEGIN TO SUFFER IF THE CARPING, CRITICAL COMMENTARIES CONTINUE MUCH LONGER. THIS IS, IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, A SUBSTANTIVE MATTER OF SOME IMPORTANCE, AND WE DO HAVE TO CONSIDER HOW TO COPE WITH IT.

9. FORGIVE THE LENGTH OF THIS ITEM. WE GOT CARRIED AWAY.

10. WHO'S GAMBEI? CHRISTOPHER

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NNN

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Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
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